United Nations

EP

Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.17/31
15 May 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Seventeenth session
Nairobi, 10-21 May 1993

AGENDA ITEM 7: PROGRAMME MATTERS, INCLUDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Rapporteur: Mr. Dick C. de Bruijn (Netherlands)

INTRODUCTION

1. Under the chairmanship of Mr. A. Lizarralde-Maradey (Venezuela), the Programme Committee held 11 meetings between 10 and 15 May 1993 to consider primarily agenda item 7 (Programme matters, including the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification). As decided by the Council at its 1st plenary meeting, it also considered, in conjunction with the relevant subprogrammes in the proposed programme of Fund activities, those parts of agenda item 6 (a) (Coordination within the United Nations system) covered by the joint progress report of the Executive Directors of UNEP and Habitat (UNEP/GC.17/4) and the parts of the 1991-1992 reports of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (UNEP/GC.17/11 and UNEP/GC.17/12) dealing with the coordination and follow-up of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, as well as those parts of the Executive Director's report on the future course of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/GC.17/28) that were pertinent to the issues referred to it.

I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

2. At the 1st meeting of the Committee, held on 10 May 1993, the Committee approved the organization of its work, as proposed in document UNEP/GC.17/PC/L.1. At its 2nd meeting, also on 10 May, it approved a number of slight modifications to that document (see UNEP/GC.17/PC/L.1/Corr.1).

3. At the 3rd meeting of the Committee, held on 11 May 1993, Mr. Dick C. de Bruijn (Netherlands) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

4. In considering the items on its work programme, the Committee had before it the following documentation: suggested timetable for the Programme Committee (UNEP/GC.17/PC/L.1); the joint progress report of the Executive Directors of UNEP and Habitat (UNEP/GC.17/4); the report of the Executive Director on programme matters requiring policy guidance from the Council (UNEP/GC.17/5 and Corr.1 and Add.1-5); the report of the Executive

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Director on implementation and mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term environment programme (SWMTEP) for 1990-1995 (UNEP/GC.17/6); the report of the Executive Director on the proposed programme of Fund activities for the biennium 1994-1995 (with indicative costs) (UNEP/GC.17/7 and Corr.1); the report of the Executive Director on international conventions and protocols in the field of the environment (UNEP/GC.17/10 and Corr.1); part II of the 1991 report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to the Governing Council at its seventeenth session (UNEP/GC.17/11); part II of the 1992 report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to the Governing Council at its seventeenth session (UNEP/GC.17/12); the report of the Executive Director on implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification 1991-1992 (UNEP/GC.17/14); the report of the Executive Director on proposals for an update of the list of selected environmentally harmful chemical substances, processes and phenomena of global significance (UNEP/GC.17/24); a note by the Executive Director on follow-up to the VIII Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP/GC.17/25); the report of the Executive Director on the future course of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/GC.17/28) and, in particular, part IV, sections A and B thereof; and the report of the Executive Director on evaluation of activities of the United Nations Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance (UNEP/GC.17/29). It also had before it a number of draft decisions submitted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives under agenda item 7 (UNEP/GC.17/L.7 and Add.1). In addition, the following information documents were before the Committee: a note by the Executive Director on strategies for the protection and development of the oceans and coastal areas (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.4); the report of the Executive Director on the contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme to international cooperation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.5); the report of the Executive Director on progress of work under the new programme activity centres (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.6); the report of the Executive Director on the World Environment Academy (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.10); and, the report of the Executive Director on implementation of Governing Council decision 16/13 on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.12 and Corr.1 (Chinese, English and Spanish only)).

5. In his introductory remarks on the issues before the Committee, the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director focused attention on the document containing the proposed programme of Fund activities (UNEP/GC.17/7 and Corr.1), the process of its preparation, its structure and presentation, the interlinkages of programmes within the document, the role of UNEP's international partners in its preparation and the attempt made to respond to Agenda 21. He said that, while the proposed programme of Fund activities was the principal document to be considered by the Committee, all the other documents before it formed an integral part of its work programme and many contained the secretariat's proposals for suggested action.

6. The representative of the Executive Director reminded the Committee that UNEP was not an implementing agency and most of its funded activities were carried out by a plethora of institutions and organizations, many within the United Nations system. Therefore, even before preparing a first draft, the secretariat had to undertake consultations within UNEP and with UNEP's partners on the structure and the intended scope of the proposed programme. The intended new structure had also been conveyed to United Nations Headquarters in view of the fact that the Committee for Programme and

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Coordination (CPC) was in the process of revising the United Nations medium-term for the 1992-1997. The new structure had, of course, also to take into account the results of UNCED. A further consultative draft had then been prepared by the secretariat taking into account the comments of United Nations agencies, regional commissions, and other key partners like the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The draft had once again been renegotiated with the same partners and then considered by UNEP management for final approval. Those consultations with UNEP's partners were not only crucial but essential in order to have a document that fully accommodated the concerns of Agenda 21, both in substance and with regard to recommendations for structural revision needed for turning UNEP into the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of the environment. Although the structure of the document conspicuously departed from the format used previously, it retained some previous subprogrammes, reorganized others, and introduced new ones, namely, subprogrammes 6 (Environmental economics, accounting and management tools), 7 (Environmental law, institutions and policies), 8 (Toxic chemicals and waste management) and 11 (Capacity-building for environmentally sound and sustainable development), to take into account the additional instructions contained in chapter 38 of Agenda 21.

7. Emphasizing another feature of the UNEP programme, the representative of the Executive Director said that UNEP worked with the United Nations system, other institutions and Governments, and one of the cardinal elements of the new Executive Director's policy was to strengthen these partnerships and forge new alliances in new and creative ways. Each activity, therefore, reflected the potential partners involved in its implementation. The programme was a closely integrated one and efforts continued to further such integration. There were explicit and implicit linkages. Cross-fertilization was envisaged within UNEP itself before bringing the external partners into play.

8. Recalling that in 1991 the Governing Council at its sixteenth session had approved the creation of an Earthwatch coordinating mechanism within UNEP and called for a reinforcement of the concept of Earthwatch, he said that a separate report on Earthwatch coordination was before the Committee (UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.2). At the same time, Agenda 21, chapter 38, stressed that UNEP should pay increased attention to environmental monitoring and assessment and, in nearly every chapter of Agenda 21, the need for improved environmental information as a service to nations and peoples was highlighted. In strengthening UNEP's assessment capabilities, several new and revised programme elements related to the operation of the Earthwatch secretariat and the production of regular reports on the environment were presented in the proposed programme.

9. Turning to the size of the proposed programme, he recalled that the Governing Council in its decision 16/44 had authorized the Executive Director to prepare a programme based on a $160 million core programme and a $40 million supplementary programme. However, because of the outlook for resources to the Environment Fund, the proposed core programme presented was divided into two - a priority one programme totalling $130 million and priority two programme totalling $30 million - in the event that the Executive Director was unable to obtain a level of funding for the entire core programme. The UNEP secretariat hoped that Governments would make contributions that would enable the secretariat to implement the entire programme, and therefore give UNEP a good start in discharging its share of

responsibility for Agenda 21. The proposed distribution of financial resources was in itself a pointer to how UNEP viewed priorities within the subprogrammes.

10. In concluding, the representative of the Executive Director said that, conceptually, the world was moving beyond economic interdependence to ecological interdependence. That was the message UNEP had wished to convey in the documentation before the Council, and it hoped that the actions proposed therein for the next two years would begin the process of attaining the goal of sustainable development from an environmental perspective.

II. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF FUND ACTIVITIES FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

A. *Subprogramme 1. Protection of the atmosphere*

11. At the opening of the Committee's discussion of subprogramme 1 (Protection of the atmosphere), the representative of the Executive Director introduced the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Professor Bolin. The Chairman of the Committee then invited Prof. Bolin to speak.

12. Prof. Bolin said that the work programme of the IPCC took into account the possible needs of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), when the latter came into force. In that connection, he noted that a special IPCC report would be completed for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties in mid-1994 or 1995. The new structure of IPCC allowed geographically balanced representation with a 28 member Bureau comprising 12 developed countries, 15 developing countries and 1 eastern European country. The new structure consisted of Working Group I (Science), Working Group II (Impacts and response options), and Working Group III (Cross-cutting, economic and other issues). The Working Groups were further divided into subgroups which would focus on specific issues related to climate change. As an assessing body, IPCC made no policy recommendations and initiated no projects. IPCC assessed the understanding of the present climate and its projection in the future, including the uncertainties involved.

13. Prof. Bolin observed that as the economies of the developing countries expanded, they would have a greater impact on the global environment. In that context, both North and South had something to learn from each other.

14. Prof. Bolin added that IPCC had focused more sharply on country studies and the development of methodologies. Together with UNEP and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), it was evolving methodologies for national inventories of greenhouse gas emissions. Such studies, it was expected, would bring to the forefront important socio-economic issues related to the mitigation of or adaptation to climate change.

15. In conclusion, Prof. Bolin informed the Committee of the Panel's work plan which was aimed at completing the IPCC second assessment report by mid-1995. The assessment would be peer-reviewed by hundreds of scientists from both developed and developing countries. In a second review process Governments would be given the opportunity to bring forth their comments and

views. That would further assist the lead authors to clarify the distinction between the scientific assessment and value judgement, which was not the task of IPCC.

16. The representative of the Executive Director, in introducing subprogramme 1, said that statement on the climate agenda adopted by the Intergovernmental Meeting on the World Climate Programme (WCP) on 16 April 1993 contained the future priorities of WCP, including those of the World Climate Impact Assessment and Response Strategies Programme (WCIRP) implemented by UNEP. Within the identified new thrust requiring studies of climate impact assessments and response strategies to reduce vulnerability, major tasks for WCIRP would be to encourage and assist in climate-related country studies and capacity building. WCIRP would also be responsive to the needs of IPCC and INC for the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

17. He said that the Intergovernmental Meeting had also focused on programme coordination and future resource needs. The Coordination Committee for WCP was to be strengthened, and an advisory panel drawn from members of executive bodies of the international organizations involved in WCP, including the Governing Council, was to be established to assist the work of the Coordination Committee. It was suggested that the executive heads of the organizations agree on the membership of the advisory panel in order to ensure balanced regional representation. The strengthened coordination process should ensure improved communication and cooperation among the six organizations involved in the WCP, and between the WCP and IPCC, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) and with the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development in New York.

18. He added that in cooperation with IPCC, UNEP was developing a common methodology for inventories of sources and sinks of greenhouse gases and testing it through a set of country studies. Similarly, guidelines for greenhouse gas abatement costing studies had been developed and tested in a set of national studies. There was equal need for common guidelines for the assessment of the vulnerability to the environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change and methodologies to test the effectiveness and socio-economic implications of measures to adapt to climate change. UNEP was cooperating in the matter with the IPCC expert group on guidelines and was preparing for a project to test and further refine the proposed guidelines and methodologies in another set of country studies.

19. He further added that UNEP was supportive of the INC/FCCC and had contributed staff and information to the INC secretariat. UNEP was developing a joint project with the INC secretariat for an information exchange system which would bring together and share information on climate-related country studies and on relevant abatement technologies.

20. In conclusion, he stated that a memorandum of understanding between UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to use the public information, education and training capabilities of the Information Unit on Climate Change (IUCC) was expected to improve WCP's contribution to endogenous capacity-building.

21. Most representatives who spoke congratulated Prof. Bolin for his excellent stewardship of IPCC since its inception.

22. Several representatives expressed reservations concerning critical linkages between sustainable development and atmospheric changes on the one hand and programmes addressing the issue of climate and energy and climate and economics on the other because they did not address the issue in a comprehensive manner. The same representatives also expressed concern about possible duplication of activities, especially in the areas of energy and economics, under subprogrammes 1 and 9. Two representatives pointed out the need to address enhancement of reservoirs and sinks and the other sources of air pollution affecting human health and the environment. In response, the representative of the Executive Director explained that areas mentioned under more than one subprogramme reflected areas of cooperation and not duplication of activities.

23. Some representatives expressed appreciation for the research work on ozone layer depletion carried out jointly with WMO in support of the implementation of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol.

24. Several representatives said that although they supported UNEP's programme on the protection of the atmosphere and reaffirmed support for WCP, especially for WCIRP and IPCC, they suggested that funding should be sought from international funds such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF). One representative welcomed the activities of UNEP and other organizations on climate change but stressed that they should not pre-empt decisions that would be taken by the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

25. Two representatives emphasized the linkages between drought, desertification and impacts of climate change. They stressed the need for the respective activities under subprogramme 1 to be pursued in tandem with the ongoing negotiations on a global convention on desertification.

26. A number of representatives supported country studies on inventories of sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, on climate change impacts and on adaptation measures, and emphasized the need to develop common methodologies.

27. The representative of Canada informed the Committee of his Government's willingness to cooperate with UNEP on developing common methodologies for impact assessment and adaptation measures and said that a first meeting of an expert group on this topic could be held in Canada.

28. A number of representatives noted with appreciation the achievements and future directions of WCIRP and strongly supported the continuation of the programme.

29. Some representatives emphasized that the output of activities 1.1.2, 1.1.3 and 1.1.4 should avoid policy-oriented recommendations, and should address both positive and negative impacts in a generic way; furthermore, it should be comprehensive in addressing all sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, and both adaptation and mitigation response options.

30. Many representatives stressed the need for close coordination among United Nations agencies in order to avoid duplication of effort. Several representatives explicitly welcomed the coordinating mechanism established by the Intergovernmental Meeting on WCP.

31. One representative highlighted the strong linkages between protection of the atmosphere and other UNEP subprogrammes.

32. One representative, in strongly supporting the climate-related activities in the subprogramme, especially IPCC and climate-related country studies, also suggested according less priority to activities 1.1.4 and 1.1.8. While important, they might be supported by sources other than those of UNEP. In particular, activity 1.1.8 could continue under current funding arrangements.

33. Several representatives expressed reservations on UNEP's public information programme on climate matters and some noted that the allocations for it were too high.

34. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) referred to the cooperation between UNEP and WMO in many areas, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Global Atmosphere Watch network, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) which contributed to Earthwatch, the Background Air Pollution Monitoring Network (BAPMoN) and the Information Unit on Climate Change (IUCC). He mentioned the activities under the World Climate Programme where WMO had the lead, although the Programme was conducted in close cooperation with UNESCO/IOC, the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), FAO and UNEP. Drawing attention to the outcome of the Intergovernmental Meeting on the World Climate Programme, he said that the first steps had already been taken towards the establishment of an advisory panel as specified in the Climate Agenda adopted at the Meeting. He reiterated the need for resources for atmospheric observing programmes carried out in cooperation with UNEP.

35. The representative of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO also emphasized cooperation with UNEP in various areas related to the protection of the atmosphere and said that IOC would welcome an increased involvement. He elaborated further on the work carried out under the World Climate Research Programme together with WMO and ICSU concerning the role of the ocean in the global carbon cycle and the El Niño phenomenon. The results of those studies and observations were of crucial importance for the work of IPCC and WCIRP.

36. In response to the discussion, the representative of the Executive Director said that Governments had endorsed the new directions for WCP at the Intergovernmental Meeting on the World Climate Programme, including WCIRP. The new directions responded directly to Agenda 21. He said that although the climate programme was by definition global most of its constituent parts served the specific needs of developing countries.

37. He pointed out that the atmosphere programme did not only concern itself with climate change but addressed the question of climate variability in the form of droughts, severe storms and floods which maintained the poverty spiral in the developing south. The UNEP Climate Unit's work on drought-preparedness, through regional and national workshops in developing countries had resulted in a guidebook on drought-preparedness for developing countries. He noted in that regard that GEF resources were only available for climate-change-related activities with global benefits and not for the climate-variability-related programmes.

38. Turning to UNEP's public information programme on climate matters undertaken jointly by the UNEP Information and Public Affairs Branch, the IUCC

and the UNEP Climate Unit, he said that he felt that it represented a model of information dissemination. In response to the observation by some representatives that the resources allocated to IUCC were too high, he observed that they were essential as IUCC activities included seminars, fact sheets, brochures and books explaining climate and its impacts, risks and range of responses, and, in the absence of national counterpart funds for IUCC, UNEP had to underwrite the programme costs.

B. *Subprogramme 2. Environmental management of freshwater resources*

39. Introducing subprogramme 2 (Environmental management of freshwater resources), the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director said that the general policy of the subprogramme was to promote the sustainable development of freshwater resources, including: (a) development of integrated management action plans for inland water systems; (b) technical and institutional capacity-building, and (c) professional training and education. The subprogramme also derived priorities from the relevant portions of Agenda 21, particularly chapter 18.

40. All representatives who took the floor on this subprogramme expressed strong support for the subprogramme, its integrated approach, and its component activities, and felt that it should be given high priority. Several representatives particularly identified safe drinking-water supply and sanitation as priority issues within the subprogramme, and some of those representatives suggested increasing the funds allocated to the areas, particularly under activities 2.1.4 and 2.1.5. Two representatives, however, suggested that the enhancement of these activities might be achieved by the reallocation of some funds within the subprogramme itself.

41. The representative of the Netherlands informed the Committee that the Netherlands Minister of Environment intended to organize an international ministerial conference on drinking water and the environment. The conference was planned to be held in the Netherlands in early 1994.

42. One representative stressed the need to link more closely the related issues of environmental management of freshwater resources and human settlements.

43. Several representatives stressed the importance of groundwater resources as an important component of their national freshwater policies, and felt that the funds allocated to activity 2.1.5 were inadequate and should therefore be increased.

44. Several representatives pointed out that their freshwater resources were threatened by aquatic plants of various kinds, and stressed the serious need to address that problem under the subprogramme.

45. The representative of Japan welcomed the establishment of the United Nations International Environment Technology Centre, which covered transfer of technology in the field of management of freshwater resources, especially for the developing countries.

46. The representative of WMO emphasized the need for coordination on water-related issues among the organizations of the United Nations system and suggested that a more formal arrangement between some key agencies might be entered into to facilitate effective coordination.

47. The representative of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) offered the cooperation of ECA in implementing those parts of the freshwater subprogramme that affected Africa.

C. *Subprogramme 3. Environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources*

48. Introducing subprogramme 3 (Environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources), the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director said that the subprogramme was a critical cluster in UNEP's work. The Committee's discussion would focus on all elements of the subprogramme except desertification control, which would be discussed at a later stage. The cluster covered soils and agricultural chemicals (programme element 3.1), forests and other ecosystems (programme element 3.3), biodiversity and biotechnology (programme elements 3.4 and 3.5) and lithosphere (programme element 3.6). Taken together, those elements interrelated with water resources, which the Committee had just discussed, and with Earthwatch - in the various assessments jointly planned and carried out. They were also the core of management, and substantially contributed to capacity-building for sustainable development. In the case of biodiversity, the subprogramme, supported by environmental law among others, had spearheaded global efforts that brought about the important Convention on Biological Diversity. At the same time, many countries were undertaking case-studies at national level on their biodiversity resources. Other major accomplishments had been the report *Caring for the Earth* sponsored by UNEP and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), among others, and UNEP's many conservation efforts at preserving endangered species - whether elephants or rhinos. Taken together, the cluster was of crucial importance in efforts towards sustainable development as it addressed a cross-section of Agenda 21.

49. The representative of the Executive Director said that, in the forthcoming years, the subprogramme would concentrate efforts in the following priority areas:

(a) Maintenance of soil productivity, prevention of land and soil degradation and stimulation of land and soil conservation;

(b) Integrated land-use planning and management of land resources;

(c) Combating deforestation and enhancing the protection and sustainable use of all forests;

(d) Conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;

(e) Making wildlands, wildlife and protected areas management a more effective instrument of sustainable development;

(f) Maximization of the safe uses of biotechnologies using microorganisms and other biological agents;

(g) Monitoring and control of the impacts of agrochemicals on natural and man-made ecosystems with special reference to human health and safety in agrochemical uses.

50. Those areas synthesized the key components for integrated environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems. The economy of many countries was based

on their natural resources contained in terrestrial ecosystems. Their soils, agricultural lands, forests, fisheries, biodiversity, genetic resources and waters made up their principal stocks of economic capital. The sustainable use of those resources might grow with more advanced scientific knowledge and with new technological opportunities. The obstacles to sustainability were not, however, mainly technical; they were economic, social, political and were increased by policy and institutional failures. Consequently, new approaches based on scientific knowledge were needed for achieving a more effective meshing of conservation and sustainable utilization issues with economic, social, political, institutional, technological and ecological factors.

51. In conclusion, he said that the main challenges for the future implementation of the subprogramme on terrestrial ecosystems would consist of making the environmental management of freshwater resources and of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources an important part of, and fully integrated with, social and economic activities to ensure that environmental activities and economic growth objectives became mutually supportive.

52. Opening the Committee's discussion on subprogramme 3, the Chairman said that the strategy of the subprogramme was to catalyze actions approved by the Council, and to encourage and support Governments and regional organizations. It did not attempt to duplicate the work carried out by other specialized organizations within their sphere of action. The subprogramme was designed as a consolidated group of terrestrial ecosystems so that it would be inadvisable to delete individual parts. Of course, more emphasis might be given to some parts than to others. The financial resources proposed were indicative and the actual amounts would be those approved by the Fund Committee.* Finally, he said that time did not allow the Committee to undertake an exhaustive analysis of the issues. The aim was to seek the Council's views on the subjects that would be of most interest for Governments and regions.

1. *General observations on priority-setting*

53. In their interventions on subprogramme 3, several representatives stressed the need to establish priorities within the subprogramme for the biennium. The debate centred on the issue of what UNEP could do within its mandate without duplicating efforts of other United Nations agencies as well as what it could do with competence. Discussion also centred round what constituted priority and what criteria should be used to establish the priorities.

2. *Programme element 3.1. Soils, agricultural lands and agrochemicals*

54. The Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director introduced the programme element 3.1 (Soils, agricultural lands and agrochemicals), highlighting its interlinkage with other subprogrammes, and its consistency with chapters 6, 10 and 32 of Agenda 21 pertaining to sustainable development. He added that the programme element contributed to worldwide efforts in preventing soil degradation, encouraging soil

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* The representative of Brazil subsequently introduced a draft decision on the subject of allocation of funds (see paras.312-313) below.

conservation, and promoting proper land-use and management of fragile ecosystems and marginal lands, as well as reducing the negative impacts of agrochemicals.

55. While many representatives expressed support for the programme element, two representatives expressed the view that low priority should be given to it.

56. One representative said that although a lot of good work had been done under this programme element, he agreed with some other representatives in according the programme element a moderate level of priority. He noted that activities such as integrated pest management could be undertaken by FAO. He added that UNEP could play a pivotal role in collating information, making global assessments, and providing guidelines for national assessments in the areas of soil degradation, natural resources inventories, global and national soils databases, and stressed ecosystems.

57. One representative stated that the whole problem of agrochemical pollution was of high importance in his country. He also emphasized that pollution by agrochemicals must continue to be assessed and monitored as part of continuing efforts towards sustainable agricultural development.

58. Several representatives mentioned that land degradation, including desertification, was a high priority for regional cooperation and for their national programmes.

59. Several representatives said that priority should be given to promoting sustainable systems in fragile soils/lands, as well as to supporting the activities of the AMCEN Soils and Fertilizers Network.

60. Other representatives identified programmes on soils, agricultural lands and agrochemicals as being particularly important, while some representatives considered that high priority should be given to the implementation of national soils policies for sustainable land-use practices. Other representatives supported activities aimed at soil protection and desertification control.

61. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said his organization was looking forward to increased cooperation with UNEP in the field of soils, agricultural lands and agrochemicals and in other programme elements of the subprogramme on terrestrial ecosystems. He also expressed the hope that the mutual consultation which had characterized collaboration in this area would be enhanced and that there would be no duplication of efforts.

3. *Programme element 3.2. Arid lands and desertification*

62. Introducing programme element 3.2 (Arid lands and desertification) the Assistant Executive Director for Environment Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director and the Director of the Desertification Control Programme Activity Centre reported on "the fresh approach" being taken by the programme in the light of the adoption of Agenda 21 and the renewed global interest in the problem.

63. The Director gave an overview of current UNEP activities in all regions and drew attention to the cooperative arrangements and activities that were under way with various international, regional and subregional organizations. He outlined the support being given to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Convention on Desertification (INCD) and to the regional and

national case-studies initiated by INCD. He outlined the particular concern of UNEP that 900 million people were at risk from desertification and emphasized the importance of gaining world-wide recognition of the social and economic impacts of desertification, a goal that was supported by many activities that had been planned and those under way in cooperation with other United Nations agencies. He pointed out that UNEP's catalytic and coordinating role was small compared with the need for a concerted global commitment to tackle this global social problem that affected so many of the poorest of the world, particularly women.

64. Commenting on the Executive Director's report on the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (PACD) 1991-1992 (UNEP/GC.17/14) and the introductory statement of the Director of UNEP's Desertification Control Programme Activity Centre (DC/PAC), the majority of the representatives who spoke expressed their strong support for the programme element and several of them made reference also to specific activities which were of particular interest to their countries.

65. Recognizing that desertification was a global problem, many representatives emphasized the importance of UNEP coordinating its activities with specific United Nations bodies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, (ESCWA), while others pointed to the need for international collaboration within and outside the United Nations system in more general terms.

66. Several representatives stressed the need for cooperation with regional organizations such as the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel (OSS), as well as with multilateral and bilateral donor agencies.

67. A number of representatives called for support for the programme of the Arab Council of Ministers responsible for the Environment in the field of combating desertification and for provision of technical support for those programmes, and the need for more financial resources for the activities listed in programme element 3.2, including support for more pilot projects on combating desertification in countries threatened by it, and the dissemination of the results of those projects to other countries.

68. Several representatives referred to existing cooperative arrangements with UNEP, which reinforced the role of UNEP's role as a coordinating agency. One representative emphasized the particularly important role UNEP must play in the struggle against desertification. While recognizing that there should be close cooperation between UNEP and FAO in the field, he asked that it be borne in mind that the mission entrusted to FAO concerned chiefly agriculture and food, and not combating desertification.

69. Many representatives strongly emphasized the role of UNEP in supporting the Convention on Desertification. One representative, however, cautioned against prejudging the decisions of the 1994 conference. One representative

requested further details on UNEP-INCD cooperation, but emphasized that it should not be at the expense of UNEP's regular activities in the field of desertification control.

70. The Chairman of INCD expressed his satisfaction at the statements regarding INCD-UNEP collaboration and his appreciation for the support already provided.

71. The need, reflected in documents and past evaluations, to focus strongly on the social and economic aspects of desertification including the problems of population movements was emphasized by several representatives and one representative pointed to the growing problem created by refugees whose arrival had had a severe effect on forest resources and had intensified the desertification process.

72. Several representatives supported the continuing validity of PACD at least until the adoption of any alternative approaches by the Convention. One representative welcomed the reorientation of UNEP's work following dissolution of the Special Account and the discontinuation of DESCON. He stressed that UNEP should continue to assume the lead in creating the long-term perspective essential to the resolution of desertification problems.

73. Two representatives recommended that henceforth chapter 12 of Agenda 21, with its six programme areas, should form the basis for all those involved in combating desertification, including UNEP and INCD.

74. Reference was made by one representative to the fact that desertification had been incorporated in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in so far as it related to the existing four criteria, but several representatives felt that that might not be enough. One representative expressed satisfaction that the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) had already submitted project proposals in that context to GEF.

75. One representative pointed to the impact of desertification on the loss of biodiversity.

76. The representative of Nigeria said his country would be willing to participate in an envisaged global desertification monitoring system with reference sites or transects.

77. Several representatives urged UNEP to develop the human resources of the Desertification Control Programme Activity Centre (DC/PAC) in order to provide more assistance to countries affected by desertification.

78. One representative said there was already a heavy programme for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in 1993, and most or all of the available expertise would be occupied, so he questioned the usefulness of a DESCON session in 1993, observing that it might be better postponed.

79. The representative of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) noted with appreciation the remarks made about his organization, UNEP and the collaborative activities under the joint venture. Reference was made to UNSO programme priorities, its efforts to harmonize efforts in the field of desertification control, and its role in assisting African countries in their preparations for UNCED and now for the INCD process.

80. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) informed the Committee about his organization's work in the field of drought and desertification, and especially about the African Centre for

Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), the drought monitoring centres and the ongoing joint UNEP-WMO review of the interactions between desertification and climate. He further mentioned WMO's support for INCD.

81. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) welcomed UNEP's fresh approach towards integrated rural development in the drylands and socio-economic issues, including those related to poverty. He stressed the need to harmonize international efforts in the field of desertification control to avoid duplication and a waste of resources. He also mentioned the collaborative programme with UNEP under which FAO implemented PACD activities in Latin America.

82. The representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) commended UNEP for the support it had given to African countries regarding the preparations for INCD.

83. The representative of the Commission of the European Communities gave details of his organization's activities in preventing dryland degradation, and expressed his satisfaction with the INCD process, which would continue to be supported by the Commission.

4. *Programme element 3.3. Forests and other ecosystems*

84. Many representatives commented favourably on the programme element 3.3 (Forests and other ecosystems), one stating that it was vital to the whole cluster of elements in subprogramme 3. A number, however, cautioned UNEP against focusing on tropical forests and requested it to look at all types of forests, as called for in Agenda 21. Some representatives also requested UNEP to reinforce activities in the tundra, wetlands and mountains as part of its other ecosystem activities.

85. Many representatives drew attention to the important role UNEP could play in the field of forest ecosystems management, particularly environmental management aspects of forest ecosystems, in collaboration and coordination with other agencies working in that area (FAO, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)). It was felt that that would bring out the coordinating and catalytic role of UNEP.

86. One representative observed that UNEP should make its position and approaches on environmental management of forest ecosystems clear and should carry out its catalytic and coordinating role, working with other agencies and institutions that had specific activities in the field.

87. One representative said that land-use and forestry could be an issue for UNEP to consider in cooperation with other agencies in order to pinpoint environmental management aspects for sustainable use of forests. Others stressed that UNEP should make use of its comparative advantage in the field of forest ecosystems management, and in monitoring and assessment.

88. One representative pointed out that some of the proposed activities in the forests programme element could be scaled down as FAO was already doing considerable work in that field.

89. Several representatives raised the issue of State sovereignty. They considered that detailed systematic assessment of forest ecosystems would infringe upon the sovereignty of States. One representative expressed serious concern that quantitative assessment using remote-sensing techniques was leading to qualitative assessment on site. In that respect, monitoring should be country-driven and the importance of capacity-building in that area should be stressed.

90. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) indicated that he was pleased to hear the secretariat state that UNEP was not an implementing agency. He also said that his organization would like to cooperate with UNEP in areas in which FAO had a comparative advantage.

91. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) expressed his organization's readiness to cooperate with UNEP in programme element 3.3, particularly in connection with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).

5. *Programme element 3.4. Biological diversity*

92. Speaking on programme element 3.4 (Biological diversity), the Executive Director commented on actions taken by UNEP in accordance with the resolutions adopted in May 1992 by the Nairobi Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and as a follow-up to the signing of the Convention at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as described in her report on the subject (UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.4). She stressed that it was important to ensure the success of the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Convention on Biological Diversity (ICCBD).

93. Referring to paragraph 4 of her report (UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.4), she reported that representatives of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) had had useful informal discussions with a number of signatories of the Convention on Biological Diversity to further mutual thinking on GEF as the interim financial mechanism for the Convention. GEF had also been invited to the meeting of Panel 3 (see UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.4, para. 10) in Montreal and had held discussions with the co-chairpersons of the Panel who would also represent UNEP at the Beijing meeting of GEF. Regarding paragraph 5 of her report, she stated that every occasion to urge countries to ratify the Convention had been seized.

94. Regarding the progress made on the establishment of the Interim Secretariat, she said that further to action already taken by her predecessor she had held discussions with the Governments of Switzerland and Spain. Accordingly, she had agreed that the Interim Secretariat would stay on in Geneva. It was agreed that criteria for establishing the permanent Secretariat should be transparent and should be determined by the Conference of the Parties. To that end, the Executive Director intended to prepare a draft list of criteria to facilitate consideration by the Conference of the Parties. She also stated that one donor country had provided the services of a special adviser to help in the work of setting up the Interim Secretariat.

95. The Executive Director pointed out that, pending approval by the Governing Council, the first meeting of the ICCBD was tentatively scheduled for 20-24 September 1993 in Geneva and she sought guidance on the formation of

the Bureau for the ICCBD. The three options were as follows, although it was her view that the last option would be the most appropriate:

(a) To reinstate the former Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Convention on Biological Diversity, but that was not feasible;

(b) To request the current session of the Governing Council to set up the Bureau, but that appeared to have procedural problems;

(c) To leave ICCBD to set up its Bureau during its first meeting in September 1993.

96. With regard to paragraphs 9 and 10 of her report, she expressed her gratitude to Canada, Costa Rica, Norway and Sweden for their support in the follow-up activities. She also thanked all members of the panels for their contribution and indicated that the reports of the panels would be made available to ICCBD together with a note by the Executive Director. Finally, she expressed her gratitude to Ambassador V. Sanchez for keeping up the momentum of the follow-up work.

97. All representatives who spoke on programme element 3.4 expressed their appreciation and strong support for UNEP's activities and for the programme on biological diversity, and they commended UNEP for its work in the area. There was general agreement that the programme element should receive high priority and that UNEP had done very valuable work over the years, had fulfilled its catalytic role and should continue to do so. Two representatives requested increased budgetary allocations for the programme element.

98. Many representatives expressed support for the early implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its entry into force as soon as possible.

99. Many representatives indicated that their Governments were in the process of ratifying the Convention. One representative stated that his Government had ratified the Convention, had drawn up a national biodiversity programme and was in the process of establishing a coordinating group. Another representative stated that his Government had announced its intention to sign the Convention and to work with other countries on issues relevant to the Convention.

100. Several representatives stressed the need for immediate action in the interim period until the Convention came into force. They supported the establishment of an Intergovernmental Committee on the Convention on Biological Diversity (ICCBD), and the convening of its first meeting in September 1993. Some representatives mentioned the importance of establishing the Interim Secretariat and one of those representatives also felt that it was important to set up an interim Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) as well. One representative stressed that interim arrangements should be discussed immediately so that the programme could start. One representative said that the cost of servicing those bodies should be recognized by the Governing Council. Another representative requested UNEP to organize annual meetings to estimate the annual financial requirements of the Convention.

101. One representative expressed concern about the location of the Interim Secretariat in Geneva and stressed that the criteria for the location of the permanent Secretariat should be very transparent and that the contents of all the offers to host it should be published in advance. He also proposed that paragraph 7 of document UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.4 should be replaced by the following: "The former Executive Director of UNEP took the decision concerning the Interim Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Governments of Spain and Switzerland offered to host the Interim Secretariat, and the decision was taken to locate the Secretariat in Geneva provisionally until the first meeting of the Contracting Parties." Regarding the last paragraph of the section on suggested action on page 4 of the same document, he said that there should either be a reference to Spain and all the candidatures submitted or the paragraph should be deleted. With regard to the Interim Secretariat of the Convention, he requested that all the candidatures submitted should be published, in accordance with the principle of transparency, and should be issued as an official document. The representative of Kenya reiterated his Government's offer to co-locate the secretariat of the Biodiversity Convention with UNEP headquarters in Nairobi in line with Governing Council decision 16/1 of 31 May 1991, which called for the strengthening of UNEP headquarters and which was further reinforced by Agenda 21, under chapter 38, paragraphs 21 and 22. The representative suggested that the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity should have this in mind during its consideration of the issue.

102. One representative suggested the desirability of a joint FAO/ICCBD task force to develop options for the intergovernmental bodies concerned for the conservation of plant genetic resources. Another representative mentioned the need for consultation between FAO and UNEP on the relationship between the Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Another representative urged UNEP to act closely with FAO with regard to Plant Genetic Resources.

103. Several representatives mentioned the need to strengthen UNEP's role in the GEF and two representatives said that linkages between the GEF and the Convention on Biological Diversity should be established.

104. Two representatives supported UNEP activities for the preparation of biodiversity country case-studies. One representative said that UNEP should support more detailed studies on the costs and benefits of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, together with the preparation of national strategies and action plans with a view to incorporating the biodiversity concerns in national planning. Another representative stressed that UNEP should continue to undertake activities complementary to and supportive of the Convention, for example the preparation of biodiversity strategies and action plans. One representative commended UNEP for supporting AMCEN biodiversity programmes and hoped that further support would be provided.

105. Several representatives supported the conservation of endangered species, and one of those representatives, stressing the importance of urgent measures for the conservation of the African elephant and the African and Asian rhinoceros populations, strongly endorsed the proposed action for elephant and rhinoceros conservation set out in document UNEP/GC.17/5/Add.4. The same representative stated that ongoing activities in elephant and rhinoceros conservation should be continued by UNEP in accordance with their Appendix 1 to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of

Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) status. Another representative stressed the need for support in implementing national action plans already formulated. The same representative, expressing particular support for the conservation of the rhinoceros, said that in his country the rhinoceros population had declined from 20,000 in 1970 to 400 in 1993, which was very serious. He urged donors to assist in the conservation of this species and other species such as the elephant, whose population had also declined in other parts of Africa. He further stated that the conservation of the diversity of wildlife was very important for the survival of humankind and proposed the preparation of action plans for that purpose.

106. Another representative expressed concern about the decline in the population of rhinoceroses and elephants. His country had ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in January 1993 and had promoted national laws and regulations to protect the diversity of wild animals and plants. Recently his Government had considered other effective measures to protect those endangered species. He expressed the hope that UNEP would be able to help countries encountering problems in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, assist them to find solutions and provide technical assistance.

107. One representative stated that his country expected to ratify the CITES Convention in the near future while another representative said that his country had gazetted national parks and other protected areas.

108. One representative expressed the view that UNEP's work on forests should be confined to biological diversity conservation and sustainable use.

109. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said that FAO looked forward to increased cooperation and coordination with UNEP on biodiversity issues.

110. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said that UNESCO would continue to cooperate with UNEP in strengthening the Man and the Biosphere programme and implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly the scientific and training aspect, within the mandate of UNESCO. He stressed the importance of biosphere reserves, which were protected areas and thus facilitated research, monitoring, conservation and training with the participation of local people. He said that the international network of biosphere reserves would make an important contribution to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

6. *Programme element 3.5. Microbial resources and related biotechnologies*

111. Several representatives stressed that the programme element 3.5 (Microbial resources and related technologies) must be given high priority in view of the emphasis given to it by Agenda 21 and the role of UNEP in that area. Two representatives emphasized the importance of the programme element, particularly the role of UNEP in enhancing safety issues in biotechnology, in collaboration with FAO, UNIDO and WHO. One representative suggested that it be given moderate priority, while another pointed out that some elements of the programme were better dealt with by other agencies such as FAO.

112. One representative stressed the need to give equal importance to conservation and utilization of biological diversity, including the technology needed to that effect and two others urged UNEP to draw up a programme or mechanism for the transfer of biotechnology to developing countries.

113. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) called for closer cooperation on biotechnology matters, in particular, within the wider framework of initiatives on the establishment of centres for technology transfer.

7. *Programme element 3.6. Lithosphere*

114. One representative, while commenting on the activities to be carried out under programme element 3.6 (Lithosphere), felt that its priority should be to support research on biogeochemical cycles (activity 3.6.1), since no other United Nations agency seemed to be doing that. In his delegation's view, an equally important activity was to support international research efforts on environmental management of groundwater resources (activity 3.6.4). He stressed, however, that activities 3.6.2, 3.6.3, and 3.6.5, pertaining to the environmental impacts of mining and oil extraction, should receive lower priority. Those issues were competently taken care of by other international agencies, and were also covered by impact assessment studies carried out under other UNEP subprogrammes.

115. Some representatives, in trying to prioritize the programme elements of subprogramme 3, attributed lower priority to the lithosphere.

116. One representative stated that providing advice and support measures to governmental regulatory bodies on how to reduce water pollution caused by mining activities (3.6.2) were especially important, due to the links with human health issues. The connection and complementary support of the Lithosphere programme element to subprogramme 2 (Environmental management of freshwater resources) was noted.

117. The Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director referred the Committee to the table on page 8 of the proposed programme of Fund activities showing the financial allocations to subprogrammes/programme elements. He explained that some programme elements such as the lithosphere, which were already receiving a low level of funding, were nevertheless carrying on with activities started in earlier bienniums, and also feeding into priority areas. Therefore, one would have to look into the respective activities planned under those programme elements in detail if their usefulness was to be assessed.

118. Summing up the discussions on subprogramme 3, the Director, Terrestrial Ecosystems Branch, expressed his gratitude for the valuable comments made by the Chairman and various delegations, which gave the secretariat a much clearer idea of the views of delegations regarding UNEP activities related to the environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources.

119. Reaffirming the technical and conceptual criteria that guided the secretariat in designing subprogramme 3, he said that the subprogramme did not attempt to be an isolated sector. Therefore, none of its programme elements (soils, forests, biodiversity, biotechnologies and lithosphere) proposed activities that were not linked with other UNEP subprogrammes. He stressed

that United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and regional bodies - the eventual cooperating agencies responsible for programme implementation - had been involved in its formulation, thus avoiding any type of duplication right from the activity design stage.

120. He pointed out that the subprogramme used a holistic approach to ecosystems and that it made up a consolidated whole with the freshwater programme, as indicated in paragraph 18.1 of Agenda 21. He stressed that the subprogramme incorporated in its proposed activities and in the linkages established the additional priorities for UNEP set forth in chapter 38 of Agenda 21 and concerning support measures for the environmental management of ecosystems, such as economic instruments, capacity-building, research, training, and environmental impact assessment.

121. In conclusion, he said that the subprogramme, which incorporated the Agenda 21 policy directions, would concentrate on integrated environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems with a view to supporting the achievement of sustainable development, particularly in certain key productive sectors related to natural resources, such as, *inter alia*, forests, freshwater, soils, agricultural lands, and biodiversity. UNEP could accomplish a specific task to those ends and catalyze activities with other organizations in an area to which there was still insufficient attention paid.

D. *Subprogramme 4. Environmental management of oceans and coastal areas management*

122. Introducing subprogramme 4 (Environmental management of oceans and coastal areas management) and its three components - regional marine environments, the global marine environment, and living marine resources, the Assistant Executive Director for Environment Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director emphasized the importance of the regional seas programme under which programmes on integrated coastal areas management, land-based sources of pollution and climate change were implemented. He underlined the subprogramme's contribution towards the preparation of the 1995 Conference on Land-Based Sources of Pollution and the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in April 1994. Finally, he stressed that the subprogramme was strengthened by collaboration with other United Nations and international organizations concerned by the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment.

123. All representatives who spoke supported the subprogramme, especially the regional seas programme, and highlighted the importance of integrated management of marine and coastal areas at the regional level.

124. They expressed the view that the highest priority should be given to programme element 4.1 (Regional marine environments). They underlined the need for cooperation between UNEP and other United Nations agencies in implementing that programme element. Representatives of African Governments called upon donor States to provide funding in order to bring regional programmes and their implementation in line with the provisions of Agenda 21.

125. Several representatives supported the financial strengthening of the regional seas programme.

126. With respect to programme element 4.2 (The global marine environment), many representatives laid particular emphasis on the need to address the issue of land-based sources of pollution as provided in Agenda 21, chapter 17, programme area B. They noted that the regional approach was the most effective manner of dealing with that problem.

127. All representatives who spoke commended UNEP on its rapid action in following up the issue of land-based sources of pollution immediately after UNCED. In that connection, the representative of Canada stated that his Government offered to host an expert meeting in the first quarter of 1994 on the review of the Montreal Guidelines for the Protection of the Marine Environment from land-based sources of pollution. The representative of the United States of America informed the Committee of his Government's offer to host the final intergovernmental meeting on this issue in Washington in 1995, making available the necessary additional funds and providing interpretation in all official languages.

128. The representative of the Netherlands informed the Committee of his Government's offer to host the World Coast Conference in The Hague from 1 to 5 November 1993.

129. One representative considered that the results of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the World Coast Conference to be held in the Netherlands in November 1993 should be taken into account at the experts' meeting to be hosted by Canada.

130. Several representatives supported the role of UNEP in the preparatory process for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

131. On the suggestion of one representative, the Director of the Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre (OCA/PAC) said he would arrange a small meeting of interested Governments the following day to discuss the modalities of the implementation of the provision in Agenda 21 concerning land-based sources of marine pollution.

132. One representative asked why it was proposed that English should be the only working language for the regional meetings on land-based sources of pollution.

133. Several representatives expressed their concern at the apparent slow response on the part of donor States and UNEP in providing the necessary funding for the effective implementation of the Abidjan Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African region. One representative requested the secretariat to invite donor agencies/Governments to the seventh meeting of the Steering Committee and the third Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Abidjan Convention, which should also review the objectives of the Plan of Action so as to harmonize them with the corresponding objectives of Agenda 21.

134. Many representatives who spoke supported the application of integrated coastal area management.

135. Two representatives urged inclusion of socio-economic aspects in integrated coastal area management programmes.

136. One representative referred to the importance of considering coastal populations in regional programmes, while another representative expressed the view that industrialization of coastal zones created considerable environmental problems. One other representative urged coordination between UNEP and Habitat on the urban aspects of environmental management in coastal areas.

137. One representative proposed that the recommendations of the policy conference on integrated coastal zone management in Eastern Africa, including the island States, recently held in Arusha, Tanzania, be taken into consideration when implementing the Eastern African Action Plan.

138. One representative also emphasized that there was a need to separate the submerged and terrestrial components of the coastal zone.

139. Several representatives supported UNEP's initiatives on climate change and sea-level rise.

140. Two representatives expressed concern about accidents at sea and urged enhanced cooperation with the International Maritime Organization.

141. One representative expressed doubt about UNEP's mandate on coordination of global programmes in the context of the subprogramme and stressed the need for some restructuring of UNEP's oceans programme.

142. Another representative proposed that the name of the subprogramme should be changed to include semi-enclosed and enclosed seas.

143. Another representative urged UNEP to pay attention to the environmental impacts of exploration and exploitation of non-living marine resources.

144. The representative of Japan expressed serious concern about the dumping of radioactive nuclear waste by the former Soviet Union into seas in the Far East, and suggested the possibility of environmental cooperation with the Russian Federation on that issue.

145. Responding to his remarks, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed his country's positive attitude with regard to the taking of steps aimed at solving that technical problem.

146. The representative of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) expressed support for the regional seas programme and stressed the importance of the linkage between global and regional conventions and action plans. He expressed the hope that cooperation between IMO and UNEP could be strengthened through the exercise of UNEP's catalytic role in capacity-building activities.

147. The representatives of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Commission of the European Communities and the Advisory Committee On Protection of the Sea expressed support for the regional seas programme and continued cooperation with UNEP.

E. *Subprogramme 5: Environmental health, settlements and human welfare*

148. The Committee considered subprogramme 5 (Environmental health, settlements and human welfare) in conjunction with subprogramme 8 (Toxic chemicals and waste management). The Assistant Executive Director for Environment Management, Institutions and Capacity-building and the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment introduced the subprogrammes briefly.

149. The Executive Director, commenting on those parts of subprogramme 5 which dealt with settlements, said that she had eagerly accepted the challenge to increase and enhance cooperation between UNEP and UNCHS (Habitat) when she assumed responsibility for leading both organizations. She stressed that, in bringing both organizations under common direction, it should not be implied that Habitat was being merged with - or submerged under - UNEP. She further stressed that human settlements issues and environmental issues were important in their own right and each should continue with its own distinct programmatic focus. She reiterated the message she had conveyed to the Commission on Human Settlements at its fourteenth session, namely, that cooperation between the two organizations would result in synergy and in improving efficiency and cost effectiveness.

150. She indicated that some changes had already been made in order to achieve the increased efficiency inherent in common administration and more changes would soon follow. She suggested that one approach would be to establish joint UNEP/UNCHS (Habitat) task forces in areas such as transportation, water, energy, etc. She welcomed the cooperation established between the information units of the two secretariats and looked forward to further cooperation in other areas.

151. During the discussion on subprogramme 5, there was a common consensus that it would be necessary to streamline the activities of UNEP and UNCHS and in that connection many representatives supported the Executive Director's statement. They underlined the need to ensure close working relations between UNEP and UNCHS. Several representatives suggested that UNEP's role in environmental aspects of human settlements should be catalytic in nature. One representative proposed an increase in resources allocated to the subprogramme as the present allocation was deemed to be inadequate. Another representative proposed that the human settlement perspective be reflected in all relevant subprogrammes, such as those on freshwater, coastal areas, energy, industry and transportation.

152. One representative called on countries to increase their commitment to regional programmes. Another representative suggested that UNEP should be involved in the field of rural settlements.

153. Many representatives called for higher priority for subprogramme 5. One representative observed that the link between human settlements and health was not a high priority, but others considered the issue to be of high priority to developing countries. One representative of a developing country noted that, as 70 per cent of diseases in his country were environmentally caused, it was essential to place emphasis on the link between health and human settlements.

154. Some representatives stressed the need to ensure that subprogramme 5 was implemented bearing in mind the recommendations of Agenda 21. One representative considered that chapters 6 and 7 of Agenda 21 should feature prominently in the subprogramme and also called for the incorporation of health aspects in human settlements planning and management. He also wished to see more support given to environmental health activities.

155. The representative of Senegal expressed full support for programme element 5.4 and announced that his country would host an international conference on environment and health in January 1994. While in general expressing support for programme element 5.4, another representative wished to know why some areas such as primary health services, AIDS, and communicable diseases were not included. Another representative noted that the activities under 5.4.1 were extremely important.

156. The representative of the United States of America, highlighting the importance of information and data, offered to share computer technology which had been found useful in planning settlements in coastal areas prone to sealevel rise. Several representatives urged support on the part of developed countries and the sharing of experience in the area of settlement planning and management.

157. Some representatives suggested that training and capacity-building in the area of environment and human health should be accorded high priority. One representative called for the preparation and implementation of action plans on human settlements, environment and human health.

158. Some representatives observed that increased attention should be paid to the process of urbanization, especially in developing countries. One representative explained that urbanization was a major issue in his country, especially since it involved socio-economic problems. Another representative called for the inclusion of the issue of open spaces, green belts and parks in human settlement programmes.

159. One representative, emphasizing the importance of planning in mitigating the causes of disasters, suggested that the programme element in that area should be further strengthened, *inter alia*, through increased cooperation with the United Nations Disaster Relief Organization and within the framework of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

160. One representative proposed that activities under programme elements 5.1 and 5.2 should be revised in the light of the Executive Director's statement. Another felt that those programme elements constituted an appropriate area for cooperation between UNEP and Habitat, while another representative felt that programme element 5.2 was of low priority since it duplicated the Awareness and Preparedness for Industrial Accidents at Local Level (APELL) programme and suggested that funds be moved to activity 5.3.1 (IPCS). The same representative felt that activity 5.3.1 was of high priority and that more resources should be provided by shifting funds from programme element 5.4. Another representative suggested that activity 8.1.1 be merged with 5.3, while some other representatives supported activity 5.3.1.

161. Two representatives gave strong support and high priority to the INTERSUN project.

162. The representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the ILO/UNEP/WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) made interventions and stressed the importance of cooperation in the area of environmental health between UNEP and WHO. They informed the Committee that a global strategy for health and environment would soon be adopted by WHO.

F. *Subprogramme 6. Environmental economics, accounting and management tools*

163. In introducing subprogramme 6 (Environmental economics, accounting and management tools), the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director said that it was a new subprogramme, representing an extension of previous UNEP activities in the area, developed in a coherent and more integrated manner. He indicated that throughout Agenda 21, emphasis was laid on the importance of coordinated effort between United Nations agencies and development assistance organizations in integrating environment and economics for sustainable development. UNCED had identified as priority areas for UNEP the development and promotion of the use of such techniques as natural resource accounting and environmental economics, as well as the further development and promotion of the widest possible use of environmental impact assessment. In that light, activities in the subprogramme included support for further development, testing and application of methodologies of valuation of environmental and natural resources, support to the establishment of systems of integrated environmental and economic accounting through the further development, testing and application of methodologies of environmental and natural resource accounting, the practical application of environmental impact assessment, cost-benefit analysis and risk assessment and management, the use and application of economic instruments and policies for environmental management and promotion and development of modalities for integrating environmental considerations in international economic cooperation.

164. The representative of the Executive Director emphasized that the implementation of the environment and economics subprogramme would focus on building on existing expertise and knowledge; responding to the needs of developing countries; catalyzing and coordinating efforts undertaken by United Nations organizations and other international agencies in the area; promoting the integration of environmental considerations in socio-economic development planning for sustainable development; enhancing the capacity of developing countries and countries in transition to market economies through practical programmes in the field of environment and economics.

165. In considering subprogramme 6, most of the representatives who took the floor emphasized the importance of integrating environment and economics to achieve sustainable development as a priority area for UNEP and supported UNEP's programme in this area.

166. A number of representatives stated that the subprogramme should receive high priority. Many representatives emphasized the critical importance of international cooperation in the area of economics and the environment, the importance of UNEP not duplicating work already under way in other international organizations, especially work undertaken by OECD, UNDP, GATT, UNCTAD and others, and the importance of UNEP focusing on the practical applications of environmental economics.

167. A number of representatives welcomed the inclusion of this new programme area in UNEP's programme and commended UNEP on its development. Several, however, pointed out the difficulty and complexity involved in its implementation.

168. One representative, while acknowledging the subprogramme as being a priority for UNEP, suggested that the allocation provided should be revised to reflect a lower level of funding.

169. One representative emphasized the importance of coordination at the regional level, and of focusing on strengthening linkages with national capacities in environmental management. Several representatives suggested that UNEP should convene regional and interregional seminars on integrating environment into socio-economic planning, approaches and methodologies, and capacity-building, specifically targeting administrators and policy-makers. One representative stated that member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) had been working in the area for some time, and were prepared to share their experience with UNEP and the international community. Two representatives noted the considerable body of research and other work related to environment and economics under way in the Latin American and Caribbean region, which should be put to use. One of them stressed that greater cost-effectiveness would be achieved in the subprogramme's activities through decentralization to the regional and national levels. Another representative stressed that, in the activities related to the support of training, research and know-how, UNEP should involve not only Governments and universities, but also centres of economic research, particularly in relation to the expertise of such centres in Latin America. One representative suggested that countries, acting within the framework of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), should consider incorporating economic analysis in their development planning policies.

170. A number of representatives emphasized the importance of introducing environmental and natural resource accounting in national accounting systems as indicators for sustainable development.

171. One representative suggested that perhaps in future the programme could be made more ambitious through changing the outputs to a specified number of countries which would publish national accounts on a trial basis, including valuation of resource depletion and environmental damage.

172. One representative stressed the importance of coordinating environmental and natural resource accounting by national Governments, and emphasized that environmental management must respect national sovereignty. Another representative stated that the inclusion of environmental and natural resource accounting in subprogramme 6 was too ambitious an undertaking and should probably be postponed to later years. Many representatives urged UNEP to concentrate on the practical application of methodologies in natural resource accounting, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of developing countries and countries in transition to market economies.

173. One representative stressed the importance of undertaking case-studies, and building on the experience of non-governmental organizations, including the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), particularly with regard to work related to the environmental impacts of structural adjustment programmes.

174. Several representatives emphasized the usefulness and growing importance of the application of economic instruments at the national level as a valuable tool in strengthening environmental management and sustainable development.

175. One representative noted that activity 6.1.5 did not adequately address the "inventory" aspect of the Agenda 21 priorities for UNEP. He suggested that the description and outputs should be reworded to include the development

of an inventory of effective uses of instruments. Two representatives indicated that national environmental action plans had incorporated economic tools such as environmental impact assessments and economic instruments.

176. One representative noted the high priority of environmental impact assessments at the national level as tools to incorporate environmental considerations into economic and development planning. Another representative suggested that activity 6.1.4 should be divided into at least two separate parts, one to provide assistance to developing countries in the practical application of environmental impact assessments, the other to promote and develop modalities for risk assessment and management in economic analysis. Emphasis was also placed by one representative on practical application of environmental impact assessments, building on existing experience, use cost-effective methodologies, and concentrating on application of existing methodologies in specific sectors, such as agriculture policies. One representative considered that adequate funding should be provided for activity 6.1.4.

177. One representative suggested that UNEP might be able to play a coordinating role in economic valuation, rather than a direct participatory role, at least in developing countries. A coordinating role would allow outputs to be achieved at reduced cost.

178. Many representatives urged UNEP to focus its activities on enhancing national capacities in integrating environmental considerations into socio-economic and development planning at the national level. One representative stressed the importance of the human resource aspect in developing countries, and its relationship to the development of the application of economic instruments to achieve sustainable development.

179. Several representatives noted the need for increased international cooperation and assistance in the field of environment and economics.

180. One representative pointed out the importance of establishing databases for the use of economic analysis and instruments.

181. A number of representatives, in stressing the linkages between environment and trade, urged UNEP to work closely with GATT and other international organizations.

182. One representative suggested that the budget proposed for activity 6.1.6 of $600,000 should be reduced to $200,000 or $300,000. Another representative suggested that UNEP's work related to trade and the environment, in subprogramme 6.1.6, should be sub-divided into two areas, one dealing with the promotion and development of modalities for promoting the mutual compatibility of environment and trade, the other covering the promotion and development of modalities for international cooperation on economic approaches to environmental issues. Two representatives stressed the importance of coordination in addressing conditionality of structural adjustment programmes, underlining the need to address the subject within the context of sustainable development. Another representative stressed the impact of taxes and tariffs on developing countries, within the context of trade, and the linkages between debt and the environment. The representative stressed the need to integrate environmental considerations into trade, and requested close cooperation among UNEP, OECD and the economic commissions.

183. One representative stressed the importance of economic analysis and instruments in tax reform and in the system of national accounts, and the environmental implications of structural reforms, including privatization.

184. Two representatives cautioned against the negative implications arising from the unilateral use of economic instruments at the national level, while another cautioned against the similar use of instruments such as eco-labelling and suggested wider use of economic incentives to promote environmental management.

185. One representative referred to the programme of action for Central Europe, in which the use of economic tools to address environmental degradation should play an important role. He referred to the need for an "eco-Marshall Plan" and a revolving fund to address ecological problems in countries in transition to market economies.

186. Two representatives noted that the integration of environment and economics was particularly important for developing countries, where demographic growth outpaced development, while another stressed the importance of integrating environmental tools in the development process to address widespread poverty.

187. Two representatives expressed the view that activity 6.1.8, dealing with the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment (CIDIE), should not be included in the subprogramme. One representative expressed support for a strong advisory role for UNEP in the international lending institutions and encouraged UNEP to be activist with respect to CIDIE, rather than participating at a theoretical level.

188. The Chairman noted the support representatives indicated for the programme, as well as the emphasis made on the need for UNEP not to duplicate efforts already under way. He pointed to the concern expressed that coordinating work on national accounting procedures might impinge on national sovereignty. He requested the representative of the Executive Director to clarify the funding aspect of the subprogramme, particularly that related to "in kind" support.

189. The representative of the Executive Director expressed his appreciation to representatives for their support of the new UNEP subprogramme. He stated that he was aware of the difficulties that it would encounter, particularly during its formative stages. He assured representatives that the secretariat would take into account the nuances expressed, and noted that UNEP was already working very closely with other organizations, including OECD, UNCTAD, UNDP, GATT and others. He welcomed collaboration between UNEP and countries with experience in environment and economics and any support they were prepared to provide to UNEP in that area. Finally, he said that "in kind" support meant that, while no additional finance would be provided from other UNEP units, there would be close interaction among the programme areas.

G. Subprogramme 7. Environmental law, institutions and policies

190. Introducing the subprogramme 7 (Environmental law, institutions and policies), the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director said that Agenda 21 had enhanced the mandate of UNEP in the field of environmental law, especially in the development of international environmental law and the provision of technical assistance to developing countries to develop national environmental legislation and institutions. He stated that in recent years UNEP had been in the forefront helping in the rapid development of international environmental law and recounted the success achieved by UNEP. He also referred to the future activities of the Environmental Law and Institutions Programme Activity Centre (ELI/PAC) which would focus on the effective implementation of existing international legal

instruments, coordination of secretariats of conventions, development of new international legal instruments and provision of technical assistance to developing countries. The programme for the exchange of information and training would also be enhanced, as would cooperation with other units within UNEP and other United Nations bodies and intergovernmental organizations.

191. Referring to document UNEP/GC.17/5, part II, section C on the Joint IMO/IAEA/ UNEP Working Group on the Carriage of Irradiated Nuclear Fuel by Sea and draft decision 4 submitted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the carriage of irradiated fuel by sea (UNEP/GC.17/L.7), the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment and representative of the Executive Director provided the information that the Joint Group had met at the end of April 1993 and had completed its work. The chairman of the group had then submitted a request that it be dissolved. The representative of the Executive Director added that in light of that the Governing Council might wish to reconsider the need for draft decision 4.

192. All representatives who spoke on the subject expressed their appreciation and support for subprogramme 7 and the activities of ELI/PAC with most of them stating that it was one of the areas of high priority for UNEP.

193. Several representatives recalled the significant role UNEP had played in the development of international legal instruments in the field of the environment. Other representatives stressed that UNEP was suitably equipped and uniquely placed to facilitate future developments in the area.

194. While supporting the development of conventions and protocols, some representatives stressed that a lot more emphasis should be placed on the efficient and effective implementation of existing legal instruments. Several representatives suggested that the implementation of and verification of compliance with international legal instruments should be strengthened and stated that there should be no undue haste to draw up new conventions. One representative emphasized the importance of the continuing development of international environmental law in that context. The representative of Switzerland stated that his Government was prepared to provide funding through UNEP to assist countries in the implementation of existing international legal instruments. Several representatives requested UNEP to provide assistance to developing countries to facilitate their participation in the negotiation, ratification and implementation of conventions and protocols.

195. Several representatives expressed their support for the coordination of secretariats of environmental conventions and saw it as a means by which the secretariats could provide common services to the parties to various conventions.

196. With regard to the Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, several representatives emphasized the importance of concluding the revision and amendment of the text by environmental law experts so that it could be adopted for the coming decade. One representative suggested that transboundary air pollution control and marine pollution from land-based sources should be accorded high priority as they had also been identified by Agenda 21 as subject areas ripe for action. Another representative suggested that there should be a mid-term review of the implementation of the programme in 1997.

197. Several representatives commented on the need to develop international conventions on cooperation in environmental emergencies, but stressed that it should be accorded low priority by UNEP as other international organizations

were already active in the area. The representative of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) informed the Committee that his organization had adopted the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation, 1990 (OPRC) and called on UNEP to cooperate with IMO in promoting its implementation. He stressed the need to enhance the capacity of developing countries to ratify and implement existing international global and regional legal instruments.

198. Several representatives expressed their support for the preparatory work on the formulation and implementation of an international legal instrument on marine pollution from land-based sources. One other representative stated that his Government favoured developing regional legal instruments on marine pollution from land-based sources. Another representative stated that the recommendations of the intergovernmental meeting to be convened in 1995 on marine pollution from land-based sources would be submitted to the Governing Council for its final decision.

199. Concerning accession to the Convention on Biological Diversity, several representatives informed the Committee that their Governments were in the process of ratifying the Convention.

200. On environmental impact assessment, two representatives expressed the view that a global legal instrument was needed. Two representatives asked for clarification concerning the measures envisaged by UNEP and requested the organization to take into account each country's specific characteristics. Another representative, together with the representative of the Commission of the European Communities, drew attention to ongoing regional activities on environmental impact assessment and suggested that UNEP should take those activities into consideration when determining its course of action.

201. On information exchange on international trade in chemicals, in particular prior informed consent, several representatives expressed their support for ongoing activities and suggested that they should be accorded high priority.

202. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) stressed the need for close cooperation between UNEP and his organization in the implementation of prior informed consent procedures, and a possible joint effort to develop a legally-binding instrument as envisaged in chapter 19 of Agenda 21. He further suggested that the Governing Council might wish to make recommendations to the General Assembly or the Commission on Sustainable Development in that regard.

203. A number of representatives expressed strong support for the assistance programme to developing countries to develop national legislation and institutions and called on UNEP to assist further in enhancing national capabilities in that area. One representative said that he would like a qualitative assessment to be undertaken of UNEP's prior assistance programmes with the purpose of improving the content and effectiveness of future activities wherever appropriate. A number of other representatives informed the Committee of recent enactments of environmental legislation in their countries and expressed the hope that UNEP would continue to provide them with technical assistance to develop their legislation further. Several representatives urged UNEP to assist countries in preparing national environmental codes and standards. One representative stressed that such standards should be prepared to meet the specific needs of each country.

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204. The representative of Japan stated that his Government was prepared to place at the disposal of UNEP its expertise in the development of national environmental legislation. Another representative stressed the importance of establishing appropriate institutions to implement policies and legislation. Some representatives called on UNEP and the international community to assist countries with economies in transition to develop their national environmental legislation and institutions.

205. Several representatives urged UNEP to cooperate closely with other United Nations bodies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, notably the IUCN, in its assistance programme to developing countries.

206. A number of representatives expressed strong support for the work of ELI/PAC in the field of information, education and training and emphasized that the provision of information on international and national environmental law and training as a means of improving the skills of national experts was essential in any capacity-building programme. Several representatives expressed their concern over the fact that no budgetary allocation had been made for information and training activities within ELI/PAC. In his reply, the representative of the secretariat explained that budgetary allocation had been made for those activities, but they had been included in the subprogramme on capacity-building.

207. Some representatives called for the reorientation of subprogramme 7 to take into account all aspects of the further development of international law on sustainable development, as envisaged by chapter 39 of Agenda 21. In that respect, they emphasized that due weight should be given to both environment and development as integral elements of the concept of sustainable development.

208. Upon the conclusion of the discussion of the subprogramme, the Director of ELI/PAC expressed his gratitude for the expressions of support for the environmental law, institutions and policies subprogramme, and stated that the suggestions and proposals made would be considered in the implementation of the Centre's work programme.

H. *Subprogramme 8. Toxic chemicals and waste management*

209. Subprogramme 8 (Toxic chemicals and waste management) was discussed together with subprogramme 5 (Environmental health, settlements and human welfare).

210. In his introduction, the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment and representative of the Executive Director gave an overview of UNEP activities in the area since 1972. Many representatives expressed their support for the new subprogramme, which had been developed as a response to the priorities for UNEP included in Agenda 21.

211. One representative made specific reference to UNEP's efforts in stimulating work not undertaken elsewhere and in fulfilling its catalytic role. The same representative mentioned that UNEP's close involvement in the IPCS was considered of the highest priority and praised the work of the IPCS. Some representatives supported the extension of the IPCS.

212. Some representatives commended the efforts made by the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. Several representatives mentioned that they had ratified or were in the process of ratifying the Basel Convention and

indicated their wish to see it ratified by others as soon as possible. Several representatives also mentioned the need to take into consideration the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and Control of Transboundary Movement and Management within Africa of Hazardous Wastes. One representative mentioned that although some aspects of activity 8.1.3 were worthwhile, elements of it duplicated work by the Secretariat of the Basel Convention already covered by trust funds, and that, therefore, support should be transferred to activities 8.1.1 and 8.1.2. Several other representatives, however, supported activity 8.1.3. One representative also hoped that technical guidelines would be established under the Basel Convention as soon as possible. The representative of the Commission of the European Communities informed the meeting that the Commission would shortly be ratifying the Basel Convention, which would then become law in the EEC countries and would enter into force in 1994. She also informed the Committee of the European Communities regulation on the import and export of hazardous chemicals, which contained a prior informed consent procedure just like the Amended London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information in Chemicals in International Trade.

213. One representative welcomed the proposal for a code of ethics on hazardous products in international trade.

214. The representative of Austria, while supporting the subprogramme, pointed out that his country, in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, had organized workshops on laboratory practice, prior informed consent and hazardous waste management within the framework of the Central European initiative and that Austria was prepared to continue those activities for countries with economies in transition.

215. Some representatives mentioned that full advantage should be taken of cooperation and collaboration with OECD because of its valuable work in chemicals and waste management.

216. One representative expressed support for the recommendations set out in the report of the Executive Director on updating the UNEP list of selected environmentally harmful chemical substances, processes and phenomena of global significance (UNEP/GC.17/24).

217. The representative of Sweden, in supporting the subprogramme, referred specifically to the intergovernmental meeting on chemical risk assessment and management called for in Agenda 21 and announced her country's offer to host the meeting in April 1994. She requested the Governing Council to authorize UNEP to convene such a meeting together with ILO and WHO, and to look into the implications for the programme budget.

218. One representative underlined the importance of activities 8.1.1 and 8.1.4 and expressed appreciation of the active role played by UNEP. He also stressed the importance of the capacity-building activities within the framework of the Amended London Guidelines mentioned under programme element 10.4 (IRPTC) (activity 10.4.8) and mentioned the need to reinforce assistance to developing countries to increase their capacity to manage toxic chemicals. His remarks were supported by two other representatives.

219. A number of representatives expressed their full support for the implementation of the Amended London Guidelines.

220. Two representatives supported the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on the Implementation of the Amended London Guidelines, held in Geneva, from 25 to 29 January 1993, to convene a task force to consider modalities for a legally binding instrument for the mandatory application of the prior informed consent procedure.

221. Several representatives spoke in support of activity 8.1.4.

222. Several representatives raised the problem of pharmaceuticals being too freely available in markets in certain countries and urged that efforts be made to control the situation.

223. One representative said the activities under 8.1.1 should be merged with activity 5.3.1 so as to reflect better the priorities discussed.

224. The representative of the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) informed the meeting that the World Health Assembly currently taking place had endorsed the call made by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to UNEP, ILO and WHO to convene an intergovernmental meeting on chemical risk assessment and management.

225. In summing up the discussion, the representative of the Executive Director said that it had been stimulating and balanced. The secretariat was grateful for the support of the Governing Council in its venture to create the new subprogramme, which would emphasize UNEP's catalytic role as a follow-up to Agenda 21. The subprogramme would include promotion of cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations on all aspects of the work of the Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre (IE/PAC), the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC) and the secretariat of the Basel Convention. As far as chemicals were concerned, he mentioned that the extended IPCS provided a unique opportunity for cooperation among ILO, WHO, FAO, UNIDO, OECD, the Commission of the European Communities and others on chemicals management, thereby avoiding unnecessary duplication of work. He said that UNEP would ensure that the programme would be results-oriented and would focus on awareness-raising, education, training and capacity building. Work to implement the London Guidelines would continue and a task force to study the legal modalities for strengthening them would be established.

I. *Subprogramme 9. Industry, energy and the environment*

226. Introducing subprogramme 9 (Industry, energy and the environment), the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment and representative of the Executive Director said that its main objective was to serve as a catalyst for the introduction of the environment dimension in industrial development, including the development of tourism and transport, and in the use of energy sources. The programme laid emphasis on a preventive approach. It would be developed in close association with other organizations of the United Nations system and also with industry.

227. Many representatives expressed their general support for subprogramme 9, observing that it dealt with some of the most important areas of national development. One of those representatives said, however, that there should be stronger linkage between the different programme elements.

For example, energy for production was of crucial importance to industry and there was the question of the pollution that was produced by transport systems, which in most cases was directly linked to the use of fossil fuels.

1. *Programme element 9.1. Energy and environment*

228. Several representatives said that programme element 9.1 (Energy and environment) was of the highest priority and that additional resources should be made available for its activities, especially those dealing with support to sustainable national energy development, renewable energy resources and the technologies for their utilization, and specifically those which addressed the problems of rural energy supply in the form of wood fuel, with its associated environmental and social impact.

229. Some representatives emphasized that the programme element did not reflect the fact that in many cases fossil fuel resources represented the most realistic and available option, especially for the developing countries, and if those resources were utilized in an efficient and clean manner they represented the most sustainable and immediate solution. Increased emphasis on those aspects was called for, especially in activities 9.1.1 and 9.1.2. The representatives felt that although the programme of Fund activities reflected the thrust of the discussions held during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it did not attempt to resolve the conflicting views. One representative specifically requested that in the strategy description for the programme element of the document, reference should be made to "environmentally sound" and "safe" technologies and development, stressing inclusion of the word "safe", in paragraphs 5 (b), (c), (d) and (e).

230. Several representatives underlined the importance of broadening the scope of some of the activities, such as 9.1.5 and 9.1.6, to include aspects like national technology research, technology transfer and adaptation, and support to local capacity-building. It was further emphasized that those activities should be more action-oriented and should not aim merely to produce publications.

231. Some representatives pointed out that energy and environment was an area in which several international and national institutions were already very active and consequently UNEP should undertake comprehensive consultations before initiating certain specific activities such as activity 9.1.1. While agreeing with the general thrust of the programme, they nevertheless considered it to be of medium priority given the other international activities being undertaken in the area.

232. One representative emphasized that the focus of the database work in activity 9.1.6 should be on support for the establishment of national databases and not merely on generic data collection. Capacity-building and local data availability was of the utmost importance. One delegation questioned the priorities established for the various activities, and stressed the importance of those relating to rural energy and renewable energy sources.

2. *Programme element 9.2. Industry and environment*

233. Many representatives highlighted the crucial importance of the programme element 9.2 (Industry and environment) in assisting the promotion of sustainable industrial development. A number of those representatives

commended the work done by the Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre (IE/PAC) and expressed their support for the programme element. Many representatives also expressed the need to increase funding for it. Several representatives felt that less than 5 per cent of the overall budget for the biennium was too little for such a programme. One representative called on UNEP to recruit additional staff and provide more resources, in particular to enable the subprogramme to perform the necessary tasks on cleaner production and APELL.

234. Many representatives stressed the importance of preventing pollution at source and of the efficient use of natural resources, as highlighted in Agenda 21, two representatives underlining the cost savings that would be generated. A number of representatives highlighted the priority of the cleaner production activity under the subprogramme. Several representatives considered the transfer of environmentally sound technology to be crucial, and several stressed the importance of the International Cleaner Production Information Clearinghouse (ICPIC) for the transfer of related information. Several representatives emphasized that ICPIC was a means of networking experts, and that regional or subregional nodes should be developed to improve it. One representative suggested that in addition to the exchange of information, the IE/PAC should facilitate the transfer of clean technologies on preferential terms. Two representatives were of the opinion that the national cleaner production centres should be more widely promoted and one representative said that they should involve industry in sharing information.

235. Several representatives expressed their support for the APELL programme to promote accident prevention and emergency preparedness, one considering that it should place more emphasis on follow-up activities.

236. Several representatives called on IE/PAC to increase its training programmes for the benefit of developing countries, one making specific reference to the usefulness and impact of its training activities in his country. Another representative emphasized the need for training in environmental management in small- and medium-scale industries.

237. A number of representatives commended IE/PAC for its publications, which were presented in a very readable manner. Several of those representatives also indicated that the information contained in the publications had helped in the taking of environmentally sound decisions.

238. Several representatives suggested that IE/PAC should increase its technical assistance, particularly in carrying out rapid technological assessments.

3. *Programme element 9.3. Transportation and environment*

239. Several representatives gave their support to the work that IE/PAC was doing in the area of transportation and the environment, as Agenda 21 had recommended. One representative pointed to the need for assistance to be given to the developing countries in establishing environmentally sound transportation systems in their rapidly growing urban areas, noting the particular need to find ways of controlling the noise and atmospheric pollution produced. Two representatives, however, felt that programme element 9.3 was not a high priority.

240. Several representatives highlighted the need to ensure that UNEP's work in the transportation area did not overlap with that of other organizations, and, in particular, Habitat.

4. *Programme element 9.4. Tourism and environment*

241. A number of representatives spoke in support of programme element 9.4 (Tourism and environment). One representative said that the European Communities had defined tourism as a special target and UNEP should explore the possibility of cooperating with the Communities. Another representative said that too little attention had been paid in the past to the environmental impacts of tourism and that the activity should be expanded. Two representatives said that the programme should be carried out in cooperation with the World Tourism Organization and Habitat.

5. *Programme element 9.5. Working environment*

242. Several representatives stressed the need to improve the working environment. One representative suggested that the IE/PAC should focus on occupational health and safety, the formulation of guidelines, the training of personnel, and safety in the use of chemicals, while another emphasized the need to give special attention to workers' welfare in their working environment. The representative of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) underlined the complementarity between ILO and UNEP activities in the area.

243. In response to the various comments on subprogramme 9, the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment and representative of the Executive Director requested the representatives to continue to indicate their priorities both between and within subprogrammes. The Director of the Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre said that she had been encouraged by the statements of support the Centre had received from representatives. She had noted the various observations made would take them into account when implementing the subprogramme.

J. *Subprogramme 10. Earthwatch data, information, assessment and early warning*

244. The Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment and representative of the Executive Director introduced subprogramme 10 (Earthwatch data, information, assessment and early warning) by summarizing the seven programme elements making up Earthwatch: Earthwatch coordination, GEMS, INFOTERRA, IRPTC, GRID, state of the environment, and the experimental United Nations Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance.

General Earthwatch issues

245. Many representatives expressed general support for the Earthwatch subprogramme, often citing the importance of good information for decision-making and the central role of Earthwatch in UNEP activities.

246. Noting that good telecommunications was vital for the subprogramme, the representative of Kenya reported that his country had of late greatly expanded its telecommunication facilities, a major consideration in that expansion being the current needs of UNEP headquarters in Nairobi. Future needs for the purpose of subprogramme 10 would be given due consideration.

247. Many representatives complimented those Earthwatch activities that focused on national capacity-building, and urged Earthwatch management to intensify its efforts in strengthening national capabilities to compile and actually analyse and use environmental information for environmental decision-making and for implementation of sustainable development programmes.

248. One representative raised a number of important questions which Earthwatch should address, concerning the capacity of countries to absorb environmental data and data-handling technology. He questioned whether the results measured up to the countries' expectations.

249. A number of representatives, while recognizing the importance of the work, noted the high cost of the subprogramme and expressed the hope that funds could be found elsewhere to allow UNEP funds to be concentrated other priorities such as capacity-building in developing countries.

250. Several representative proposed that the Governing Council should adopt a decision on a broad forward-looking assessment of Earthwatch, its strategy and activities, by the Executive Director with the assistance of an ad hoc government-designated expert group with a view to developing ways and means of strengthening the monitoring and assessment functions of Earthwatch to provide a better basis for decision-making. Particular attention should be paid to defining and addressing user needs and the capacity to use environmental information, particularly in developing countries. One representative particularly stressed the need fully to integrate components of Earthwatch to make it a fully operational system.

251. A number of representatives noted that State sovereignty should be clearly respected while dealing with environmental information gathering, analysis and dissemination. One representative specifically referred to issues like biodiversity and land-use planning as being issues of national concern only. One representative said that the country concerned would have to authorize the use of the information before it could be released.

252. Two representatives added that in the post-UNCED phase it might be useful to avoid, in UNEP's programmes, terminology that could in some languages have a "policing" connotation or appear to disregard the sovereign rights of countries, especially when related to biodiversity and tropical ecosystems.

2. *Programme element 10.1. Earthwatch coordination*

253. Several representatives referred to strengthening and increasing coordination of the United Nations system-wide Earthwatch, with one referring to the ACC recommendations on the matter and another mentioning the Commission on Sustainable Development. A UNEP role in the encouragement and coordination of complex work on environmental indicators was particularly supported by a number of representatives.

254. One representative pointed out that UNEP should adopt a balanced approach and carry out monitoring and assessment of natural resources in developed countries as well. In particular, there was an urgent need to monitor unsustainable lifestyles, and to have a scientific assessment of biodiversity loss in mono-culture forests and the clear-cutting of old-growth forests in the temperate and boreal regions.

3. *Programme element 10.2. Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)*

255. Several representatives expressed their support for programme element 10.2 (Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)) in general. Several others specifically expressed their satisfaction with the implementation of the GEMS environmental pollution programme (GEMS/Water and GEMS/Air, in particular), while two representatives specifically complimented the Environmental Information Network activities. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) mentioned that FAO supported the improvement of GEMS/Food programme.

256. One representative expressed some concern about the data quality of GEMS outputs, but was confident that the issue was being dealt with already and offered his delegation's full support for those efforts. Another representative called for greater emphasis on standardization of methods and utilization of quality assurance programmes utilizing the experience of UNEP and IAEA and that of other countries.

257. The representatives of WHO and WMO expressed their support for the GEMS programmes and indicated that good cooperation took place. They mentioned the need for more funds to assist developing countries with their national level activities to allow them to participate in the programmes.

4. *Programme element 10.3. INFOTERRA*

258. In the Committee's discussion of programme element 10.3 (INFOTERRA), one representative urged that additional funds be provided to activity 10.3.7 (Monitoring of development of technologies relevant to sustainable development). Another representative recommended that INFOTERRA be given additional funding to increase its number of national seminars and to enable the expansion of its promotional activities including publications in national languages.

259. Two representatives recommended that INFOTERRA take a more proactive approach in supplying information to developing countries and in promoting its activities.

260. Several other representatives recommended that the programme element put an increased emphasis on training and national capacity-building.

261. One representative recommended that the programme element cooperate more closely with other United Nations bodies, especially UNDP, and further suggested that INFOTERRA national focal points should be included in the UNDP Sustainable Development Network. The same representative recommended the expansion of the programme element's electronic mail capacities.

262. The representative of FAO recommended close cooperation with the FAO Agricultural Research Information Service (AGRIS) and the Current Agricultural Research Information Service (CARIS) networks.

5. *Programme element 10.4. International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC)*

263. In the discussion of programme element 10.4 (International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC)), many representatives expressed their appreciation for the work of IRPTC.

264. One representative said that IRPTC should advertise its services more to make it better known at the national level.

265. Some representatives advocated that steps be taken to strengthen the legal basis for the London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade, particularly its prior informed consent procedure.

266. One representative reminded IRPTC to focus on easy access to data, to recognize the clients needs, and to accelerate the redesign of its computerized databank.

6. *Programme element 10.5. Global Resource Information Database (GRID)*

267. A number of representatives particularly supported the programme element 10.5 (Global Resource Information Database (GRID)) within the overall context of Earthwatch, most of them specifically asking that more emphasis be given to national activities, in particular capacity-building.

268. One representative expressed satisfaction with the progress made by GRID since sixteenth session of the Governing Council, and stressed that the future role of GRID was dependent on access to good telecommunications. He further noted that GRID should promulgate data standards and data quality guidelines, and take advantage of existing data management systems. GRID should be well integrated into the overall Earthwatch system.

7. *Programme element 10.6. State of the environment*

269. A number of representatives specifically supported programme element 10.6 (State of the environment), noting that the reports provided critical information for identifying environmental issues.

270. One representative added that to be useful, state-of-the-environment reports must be accurate, timely, and easily understood by users. Another representative added that the reports should be widely distributed.

271. One representative indicated that state-of-the-environment reports should preferably concentrate on thematic issues, and cover in-depth reviews of areas and regions not covered by other reports.

272. Several representatives stressed the importance of the preparation of regional and national state-of-the-environment reports and urged that high priority be given to them because of their usefulness in policy-making.

8. *Programme 10.7. United Nations Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance*

273. In considering programme element 10.7 (United Nations Centre for Urgent Environmental Assistance), many representatives referred to the experimental phase of the Centre, and the important need that it was intended to fill as a "switchboard" providing rapid access to specialized expertise. Two of those representatives from developing countries particularly highlighted their need for help in managing environmental risks. Several, however, were concerned

that the initial mandate was poorly defined and the results to date inconclusive, particularly in relation to other United Nations emergency response efforts within the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

274. One representative proposed replacing the Centre by a small unit attached to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, while a number proposed extending the experimental phase for one more year, with an evaluation at the end of that period.

275. The representative of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) cautioned against an extension of the mandate of the Centre beyond industrial man-made disasters to natural disasters, since that would make the task of coordination much more complicated.

9. *Concluding remarks by the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment*

276. In his concluding remarks, the Assistant Executive Director for Earthwatch Coordination and Environmental Assessment emphasized the increasing focus of Earthwatch elements on national capacity-building for the use of environmental data. In reply to those representatives concerned by international monitoring and issues of national sovereignty, he stated that UNEP did not plan to collect data without full discussion with the countries concerned. He agreed that temperate and boreal forests had been neglected internationally and indicated that GRID hoped to collect such baseline data. The cost of the subprogramme appeared larger than other subprogrammes because most Earthwatch units were programme activity centres where all operational costs, including staff salary costs, were included in the budget, which was not the case with other units. With reference to the proposed group of government-nominated experts to review Earthwatch, he indicated that funds could be found in the proposed Earthwatch budget. In response to a question about cooperation on urgent environmental assistance with non-governmental organizations, he mentioned that UNEP had received a letter from the International Green Cross, and that UNEP would explore possible cooperation in that area. The delay in modernizing the IRPTC database was due to some technical problems and would soon be overcome with the help, *inter alia*, of the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Director of INFOTERRA was already cooperating with the UNDP Sustainable Development Network and was improving electronic access. Concerning the FAO comment about INFOTERRA cooperation with FAO networks, UNEP had supported the creation of CARIS, and most AGRIS centres were registered with INFOTERRA.

L. *Subprogrammes 11 (Capacity-building for environmentally sound and sustainable development) and 12 (Support to and cooperation for environmental action (including global and regional cooperation))*

277. The Committee considered subprogramme 11 (Capacity-building for environmentally sound and sustainable development) in conjunction with subprogramme 12 (Support to and cooperation for environmental action (including global and regional cooperation)). In introducing the subprogrammes, the Assistant Executive Director for Environmental Management, Institutions and Capacity-Building and representative of the Executive Director said that the two subprogrammes were aimed at strengthening the capacity of countries for sustainable development. A detailed analysis of

Agenda 21 by the secretariat had shown that almost all chapters had a capacity-building component in them. To give focus to the more integrated aspects of capacity-building, namely education, information, training, technology transfer and institution-building, those elements had been grouped under one heading, within subprogramme 11, while all aspects of regional cooperation were in subprogramme 12.

278. Furthermore, UNEP had set up a task force under the chairmanship of the previous Deputy Executive Director to refine, improve and broaden its approach to assisting developing countries to strengthen their capacity for decision-making and management in the environmental field.

279. The task force had recognized in particular that, as the environment was an integral and vital part of the sustainable development decision-making process, capacity-building must be concerted, coherent and comprehensive. Prior to the current session of the Governing Council, a series of consultations had been undertaken with other agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, in particular with UNDP, with a view to starting to build a coherent and comprehensive programme.

1. *Programme element 11.1. Environmental education and training*

280. All representatives who spoke underscored the importance of capacity-building and expressed strong support for the programme element.

281. One representative mentioned that capacity-building could be likened to the hub of the wheel of Agenda 21 as far as developing countries were concerned. He stressed the need for increased funding for the subprogramme as well as the need to identify viable modalities for the successful implementation of training programmes. He called for the regionalization of training programmes, the development of suitable training kits and for additional focus to be placed on training of trainers programmes. He requested countries in the different regions to identify competent national institutions in the field of environmental management training that had the capacity to provide such training at the regional level. In this respect, he mentioned that his country had identified four such institutions with well-conceived programmes in environmental management training for the African region.

282. Other representatives stressed the importance of instruction, education and capacity-building as essential elements in the pursuit of sustainable development.

283. One representative expressed the view that the goal of instruction and education was not only to acquire knowledge but also to change patterns of consumption and production.

284. Some representatives offered to share with UNEP, and, through it, with other countries, their recently developed instruction, educational and training initiatives.

285. The representative of Kenya expressed deep appreciation to UNEP for having awarded training fellowships to an institution in his country during UNEP's 20th anniversary celebrations in December 1992. Another representative announced that his country had established a university of nature and environmental sciences which should benefit from UNEP's assistance in drawing up its teaching programmes.

286. Several representatives indicated the importance of training in the field of environmental law and institution-building for their respective countries.

287. Some representatives stressed the importance of strengthening training in developing countries in order to ensure the continuation of projects even after external funding and assistance had ceased. They said that if countries did not have the necessary know-how and capacity in, for example, the field of biodiversity, then an important heritage could be lost forever. They called for training programmes not just to provide a simple transfer of technology and know-how from developed to developing countries, but more importantly to promote the development of local know-how and technology.

288. A number of representatives made reference to the UNEP International Environment Technology Centre and called for the above Centre to make available to developing countries suitable technologies aimed at reducing pollution and managing urban and hazardous wastes in developing countries. One representative stressed the important role of the Centre in promoting transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, in particular, in the field of big city and freshwater management.

289. One representative emphasized that technology to be transferred from the developed countries must be adapted to the technological and economic conditions prevailing in African countries. In that connection, his country had submitted a specific proposal to the present session of the Governing Council on the creation in Tunisia of a centre on environmentally sound technology with the aim of developing and adapting technologies for use in African countries and he hoped the Council would consider the proposal favourably. He also stated that his country had sent a note verbale to UNEP on 6 April 1993 expressing the desire to host an international environmental technology centre for the African region and that consequently the report of the Executive Director (UNEP/GC.17/5) should be revised.

290. Some representatives felt that it was somewhat premature to establish new technology centres and that there should be an assessment of the existing centre before any decision was taken.

291. One representative supported the proposal of Tunisia and expressed his surprise that in view of the enormous needs in that regard it was deemed necessary to await an assessment of the Centre that existed in Japan before establishing new ones. One representative said that his country would welcome the possibility of establishing a technology centre in Europe in view of the problems of the Eastern European countries.

292. Some representatives made reference to the establishment of a network of green planners. They proposed this network to be seen as a form of capacity-building and believed that joining it could be worthwhile.

293. One representative supported consultations with the international agricultural research centres of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research and other already existing organizations to develop mechanisms for the generation and dissemination of environmentally sound technology.

294. A number of representatives of international organizations also expressed strong support for the programme element and welcomed the successful cooperation they had enjoyed with UNEP in the field of environmental education and training. In particular, the representative of UNESCO spoke of the long and fruitful cooperation between the two organizations in environmental education and mentioned that, in preparing the next phase of the joint UNESCO-UNEP International Environmental Education Programme, UNCED follow-up initiatives would be reflected.

295. The Assistant Executive Director stated that in addition to the four countries which had responded to the letter from the Executive Director dated 17 July 1991 on the subject of other international technology centres, UNEP had received a note verbale from the Permanent Mission to Tunisia in Geneva dated 6 April 1993. The note verbale referred to a recommendation of UNCED on international technology centres and strongly hoped that such a centre would be established in Africa so that African countries could adopt new technologies, including sophisticated ones, which they really need.

2. Programme element 11.2. Environmental awareness: public information

296. All the representatives who spoke expressed strong support for UNEP's activities to promote environmental awareness.

297. Two representatives drew attention to the importance of documentary and training films and one representative said that documentary films provided a useful medium for the exchange of experience. One representative called for the strengthening of information facilities in regional offices.

298. One representative expressed the view that many man-made disasters could be avoided if the public was better informed and trained.

299. Another representative thought that the problem was not too little information but rather too much, and UNEP must ensure that information was carefully targeted.

300. The Chief of Education and Training Unit and the Chief of the Information and Public Affairs Branch of UNEP both stated how really encouraged they were by the importance attached and support given to subprogramme 11 on capacity-building by all the distinguished delegates and thanked them for the guidance received.

M. Subprogramme 12. Support to and cooperation for environmental action (including global and regional cooperation)

301. Several representatives expressed their overall and strong support for the proposed activities in subprogramme 12 (Support to and cooperation for environmental action (including global cooperation)).

302. Several representatives supporting activity 12.1.7, expressed the view that UNEP's system-wide environmental coordination had a central role to play in the post-UNCED era. UNEP also had an important role in environmental coordination at the regional level. One representative said that, pending an examination and possible reorganization of UNEP's regional office system, priority in regional activities would in his view be given to existing, specific regional activities - including those in other subprogrammes. Accordingly, he suggested that priority in the subprogramme should be given to activities 12.1.2, 12.1.5 and 12.1.7.

303. Many representatives stated that UNEP's subregional activities, as described in activity 12.1.2, for their specific geographical areas should be strengthened, including those for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), as well as those for small island States of the Indian Ocean, and those identified by the Lucerne Conference on the environmental action programme for Central and Eastern Europe and the VIII Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Latin America. One representative referred to his Government's commitment towards the development of the North-East Asian Regional Environment Programme, and requested UNEP's cooperation in this initiative.

304. Several representatives considered that UNEP's regional and subregional activities should be strengthened. One representative expressed the view that such regional activities should be based on UNEP's existing sectoral activities. Some other representatives expressed the view that UNEP's activities at the regional level should be provided with increased resources. Another representative stated that regionalization of UNEP activities would generate a very positive impact.

305. One representative indicated that, in order to strengthen UNEP's action at the regional level, it was important to rationalize the functioning of its regional offices and to give them greater autonomy, especially ROLAC. He also suggested that the New York liaison office could be restructured to include UNEP's relations with the World Bank and the GEF among its functions.

306. Several representatives pointed out that, in order to achieve coherent capacity-building and cooperation at regional and national levels, it was essential that UNEP should work together with other United Nations bodies, e.g., UNESCO, WHO, the regional economic commissions, and, in particular, UNDP.

307. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) drew attention to a recent high-level consultation meeting between UNEP and UNDP and stated that, in discharging the mandate for capacity-building it had received from UNCED, UNDP intended to work closely with UNEP within its Capacity 21 programme. UNEP-UNDP collaboration would draw upon the valuable models of capacity-building developed by UNEP in the fields of environmental law and environmental management training. He stated that UNDP would support UNEP's activities in capacity-building.

308. One representative pointed out, and the representative of the Executive Director agreed, that activity 12.1.2(e) should refer to "East and Central European countries" instead of "developing countries".

309. The representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) briefly described OAU's past activities to assist member States to elaborate common positions during negotiations on international environmental instruments and during the preparatory stage for UNCED. He pledged OAU's willingness to assist its member countries in implementing Agenda 21.

310. Several representatives emphasized the need to strengthen UNEP's regional offices and one representative called for a review of the functioning and location of the regional offices. One representative proposed the creation of a subregional office of UNEP for the Indian Ocean islands.

311. In his concluding remarks, the Assistant Executive Director responded that the question of strengthening UNEP's regional offices was an important matter which needed to be addressed by the Executive Director and the ministers participating in the plenary session of the Governing Council.

L. *Draft decision on the proposed programme of Fund activities for the biennium 1994-1995*

312. The representative of Brazil, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, indicated that they would be submitting a draft decision concerning the proposed 1994-1995 programme of Fund activities. In that respect, he felt that the prevailing mood in the Governing Council was one of disappointment. The hope had been that the first session of the Council since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) would have helped chart a new course and that the efforts of developing countries to address problems of the environment and sustainable development would have been stimulated. However, no new resources for that purpose appeared to be forthcoming and there was a danger of the opportunity being lost. He said that the proposals of the Group of 77 and China had been made in line with the results of UNCED and took into account the need to avoid duplication of activities. He stressed as well the need to identify new resources to finance UNEP's activities. The draft decision tabled by the Group of 77 and China, along those lines, proposed adjustments to the programme in view of the priorities for funding by the Environment Fund.

313. In response, the representative of the United States of America said he looked forward to full partnership in the follow-up to UNCED, stating that his country had provided additional resources to support UNEP's role in that context. But he warned that, unfortunately, resources were limited and in the immediate future there would have to be "smarter" rather than more spending to initiate the follow-up to UNCED. He expected that discussion on the priorities for UNEP would be facilitated by the contribution of the Group of 77 and China, and hoped that the process would lead to a mutually acceptable outcome.

III. OTHER PROGRAMME MATTERS

A. *Report on the implementation of system-wide medium-term environment programme 1990-1995 and mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term environment programme for the period 1990-1995*

314. The Assistant Executive Director for Policy Development and Inter-Agency Affairs, in introducing the item, said that he agreed with the assessment contained in the self-evaluation by the Designated Official for Environmental Matters that system-wide medium-term environment programme had

been a good compilation of the environmental activities undertaken by the United Nations system, but had not been effective as a programming tool for various reasons. In light of the conclusions of the document and the need to redefine coordination arrangements in the light of the results of UNCED, he said that the Executive Director, on the advice of the DOEM, had decided to await the outcome of post-UNCED inter-agency recommendations in that regard which she would make at the regular session of the Governing Council in 1995.

315. Some representatives welcomed the proposals and recommendations of the Executive Director with respect to the system-wide medium-term environment programme (SWMTEP) (UNEP/GC.17/6) and expressed their support for them.

316. One representative underlined strongly the need to make UNEP more efficient so as to enable it to enhance its catalytic role in the future. He agreed that it was important for there to be close coordination within the system and he emphasized UNEP's central role in achieving it. He cautioned, however, against a proliferation of expensive and unnecessary meetings and documentation, and said he looked forward to the Executive Director's future proposals.

317. One representative noted that adequate and effective cooperation and coordination in the United Nations system was of critical importance in UNCED follow-up. SWMTEP had been a useful compilation of information concerning the environmental activities of the United Nations system but it had not been an effective programming tool. In that respect he strongly supported the need for an effective planning and strategy process in the field of the environment, as was used in preparing SWMTEP itself as well as the document before the Council. Document UNEP/GC.17/12/Add.1 also had a bearing on how new inter-agency arrangements should ensure continuation of the process that underlay preparation of SWMTEP and the integration of the results of the process of compiling and discussing coordination of United Nations environmental activities into a system-wide sustainable development strategy to be developed through the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

318. That representative was of the opinion that the tighter the coordination within the United Nations system, the more effective would be the system's response to UNCED. In that respect, a system-wide strategy for sustainable development should be developed through IACSD with the full participation of the successor group to the DOEM. The resulting strategy or programme could range from a loose coordination framework to a SWMTEP-type of document or a centralized master plan for the United Nations system with centralized coordination and decentralized implementation. Serious efforts would have to be made for a division of labour within the United Nations system and the resulting document could go to the Commission on Sustainable Development for its comment and eventually to the Economic and Social Council for approval. A critical factor that would determine the success of such a document would be if it encouraged adoption and implementation by the various governing bodies in the system and the support of Governments in ensuring that individual agencies, programmes and entities acted in accordance with the strategy or programme document.

319. One representative said that he was aware of coordination problems since UNCED; in his opinion, it was desirable for organizations concerned to propose means for action. He proposed that the West and Central African plan be updated and that effective coordination also be established at the regional level.

B. *Progress report implementation of Governing Council decision 16/13 on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories*

320. Introducing the Executive Director's progress report on the implementation of Governing Council decision 16/13 on the environmental situation in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories (UNEP/GC.17/Inf.12), the Assistant Executive Director for Policy Development and Inter-Agency Affairs pointed out that the report was based on the visit of a UNEP technical mission that had assessed the availability of data in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories with special emphasis on the completion of the environmental database. The mission had been sent in response to Governing Council decision 16/13. It had been received by the Governments of Jordan, Syria and Egypt, as well as by the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunisia.

321. The Assistant Executive Director stated that the mission had taken place shortly before the current session on the Governing Council so as to allow the incorporation of the latest possible information on the subject in the light of the development of the multilateral peace process.

322. Most representatives who took the floor commended UNEP for the technical mission and noted the report with interest. Many representatives who spoke supported the report's recommendations but noted its preliminary character because the mission did not visit the occupied territories. They called upon the Executive Director to follow up and complete a report on the environmental and health situation in the occupied territories.

323. The representative of Israel called on delegations not to use the Governing Council as a forum for political discussions. Israel's position in regard to the visit of the delegation was very clearly explained in paragraph 2 of the report.

324. One representative pointed out that the report did not touch on the request by Governing Council decision 16/13 to the Executive Director to take the actions and measures capable of halting environmental deterioration in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

325. One representative said that the Governing Council should simply take note of the Executive Director's report. He considered that it was not necessary to take further action which might risk involving UNEP in matters outside its mandate. He also referred to the undesirability of taking any action that might unintentionally have an unhelpful effect on the ongoing multilateral peace negotiation process.

326. Two representatives noted inconsistencies in the Arab version of the report. One representative drew attention to a typographical error concerning the population figure in paragraph 6 of the document, which should read 150,000 and not 15,000.

327. The comments were noted by the Assistant Executive Director, who said they would be incorporated as necessary.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND DRAFT DECISIONS

328. The draft report of the Programme Committee (UNEP/GC.17/PC/L.2 and Add.1-5) was considered by the Committee at its 9th and 10th meetings, held on Friday, 14 May 1993, and at its 11th meeting, on Saturday 15 may. The draft was considered paragraph by paragraph and oral amendments were introduced from the floor. The present report, which incorporates all the agreed amendments, was adopted by the Committee at its 11th meeting, on Saturday, 15 May 1993.

329. In view of the decision adopted by the Council at its 2nd plenary meeting, held on friday, 14 May, that all draft decisions emanating from the sessional committees would be chanelled through the negotiating committee to the plenary for its consideration, the Programme Committee did not take up the draft decisions before it.

330. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chairman declared that the Committee had concluded its work, at 5.30 p.m. on Saturday, 15 May.